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PP RUEHMA RUEHPA
DE RUEHUJA #1517 2320645
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P 200645Z AUG 09
FM AMEMBASSY ABUJA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6830
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 2058
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE 1012
RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 1826
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK

UNCLAS ABUJA 001517

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/W, INR/AA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KIRF](#) [KISL](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIA: NIGER STATE POLICE ARREST THOUSANDS IN
RAID ON ISLAMIC SECT

REF: ABUJA 1436

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

11. (SBU) Summary: Niger State security forces raided the Darul Islam compound on August 15. Press reports indicate police arrested approximately 4,000 people and detained them for questioning. Although the operation was peaceful, religious leaders and human rights activists allege that the GON violated the rights of innocent people. End Summary.

12. (SBU) Darul Islam, an Islamic sect led by Amrul Bashir Abdullahi, settled in Niger State, 17 years ago with the goal to dedicate themselves to strict adherence of the Quran and isolate themselves from distractions in mainstream society. Nigerian press dailies reported that on August 15 a combined team of police, immigration, and prison officers raided the Darul Islam compound located near Mokwa in Niger State (about 100 kilometers outside state capital Minna). State Police Commissioner Mike Zuokumor told local press that police acted after receiving reports that the sect was forcibly holding women and children. State Police Public Relations Officer Richard Oguche added that action was taken to prevent a re-occurrence of crisis similar to those caused by Boko Haram two weeks earlier. Members of the sect co-operated with the security officers and as a result no deaths or injuries occurred. Local press claim at least 200 foreigners from Niger and Sudan were among those arrested.

13. (SBU) Austin Njoku of the National Human Rights Commission told PolOff August 18 that women and children were housed in the Government Technical College Mokwa while police investigated the compound. Police did not find any weapons. Njoku claimed sect leaders were transported to Abuja for questioning, but did not know the charges against them or if they had lawyers. He also claimed many Darul Islam members are "migrants" and maintained the GON acted reasonably and in the best interest of the children by evacuating the community. Other observers, however, including Executive Director of the Human Rights Monitor, Festus Okoye, alleged the GON may have violated the constitutional and human rights of thousands of innocent people.
MCCULLOUGH